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The Life and Times of Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla. By Arthur Howard Noll, LL.D., and A. Philip McMahon. vii and 200 pp., portrait of Hidalgo, and index. A. C. McClurg & Co., Chicago, 1910. \$1.

Mexican gold coins are stamped with the image of Hidalgo, and a nearly ideal profile it is. In this biography of the Father of Mexican Independence, the material entering into the account of historical conditions which made the life of Hidalgo significant was mined partly in Dr. Noll's previous works, "A Short History of Mexico," and "From Empire to Republic"; but partly it was obtained, with Mr. McMahon's aid, in the City of Mexico, where there is at least one very large private collection of original documents relating to the events of 1810-1811. It is all good material, and the character of Hidalgo—a somewhat idealized image—stands out clearly. We see him, during the years that preceded the insurrection, laboring earnestly and wisely for the improvement of the oppressed aboriginal population:

"He was assured that the Indians had capacities for something better than slavery in the mines or in the haciendas, which had been imposed upon them by the *conquistadores* with their detestable system of *repartimientos* and *encomiendas*, and which had been continued to his time. His first thought was for their industrial education. He would develop their own industrial resources, and teach them how to value their freedom."

His brief season of triumph, when he led an undisciplined multitude against the Spanish soldiery; his capture and imprisonment, trial and execution—all the essential features of the familiar story are given in this small volume, without elaboration and yet with some details which add new significance to the "Grito de Dolores." Special interest has always attached to events that are presented in Chapter VII, entitled "The Closing Scene":

"The trial of Hidalgo was delayed until he could be formally degraded from the priesthood and so be made subject to military or civil courts. To effect this, a delegate from the Bishop of Durango came to Chihuahua and performed the ceremonies of degradation. The fetters were removed from the prisoner and he was vested again in his priestly habit and presented before the ecclesiastical court thus provisionally instituted. Sentence of degradation was then duly pronounced. After the removal of his official garments, fetters were again placed on the old man and he was presented to the military tribunal to be tried, convicted, and sentenced."

"The heads of Hidalgo, [and his fellow revolutionists] Allende, Aldama, and Jimenez were brought to Guanajuato and placed upon pikes at the four corners of the Alhondiga de Granaditas. Thus a century earlier the heads of traitors had been placed upon the Tower of London. They were to serve as a warning that a similar fate awaited any in Mexico who chose to revolt against the Government, the Viceroy, the *Audiencia*, or the Holy Office. The effect was exactly the opposite of what had been expected. The ghastly heads thus exposed to view served to remind all who saw them that certain men had sacrificed their lives for the cause of the Independence of Mexico; and this aroused public curiosity and public opinion in Mexico upon the subject of personal rights and the meaning of Independence. The heads were removed from the pikes in 1825, when it was supposed that what these men had striven to attain and had fought and died for had been accomplished in Mexico. They were brought to the capital and buried in the apse of the great cathedral under the 'Altar of the Kings.'"